

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Telecommunications and Energy  
Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company  
Docket No. D.T.E. 02-24/25  
Record Request Response

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**Record Request No.: AG-RR-56 (Electric)**

- a. Explain what the company has done since the two incidents described in Authorization 1133 and Authorization 1157 to prevent similar incidents in the future.
- b. Indicate the amount of these repair costs included in plant in-service.

**Response:**

For both of these incidents, the following measures were undertaken to prevent similar incidents in the future:

- Tree trimming was accomplished to increase clearances around the perimeter of the substation.
- Animal protection was installed (or reinstalled) on high voltage equipment to prevent animal contact.

Increasing tree clearances around the substation is intended to discourage squirrels from accessing the substation from trees and branches. Animal protection consists of plastic insulating materials that are installed on bushings and other energized parts exposed to squirrel contact.

In the case of Authorization 1133, animal guards and animal protection were re-installed on the 13.8kV substation equipment and new animal protection was installed on the low voltage bushings on the new substation transformer. Under Authorization 1157, animal protection was re-installed on the bushings of the #9 circuit breaker.

It should be noted that no type of animal protection is foolproof, and some parts of the substation cannot be effectively insulated against contact. In the case of the failure covered under Authorization 1157, animal protection already existed at this location and did not prevent the animal contact. Animal contact, particularly involving squirrels, is an industry issue that is by no means limited to Fitchburg.

The amount of these repair costs included in plant in-service were \$75,921 for Authorization 1133 and \$27,406 for Authorization 1157.

**Person Responsible:** Mark H. Collin